

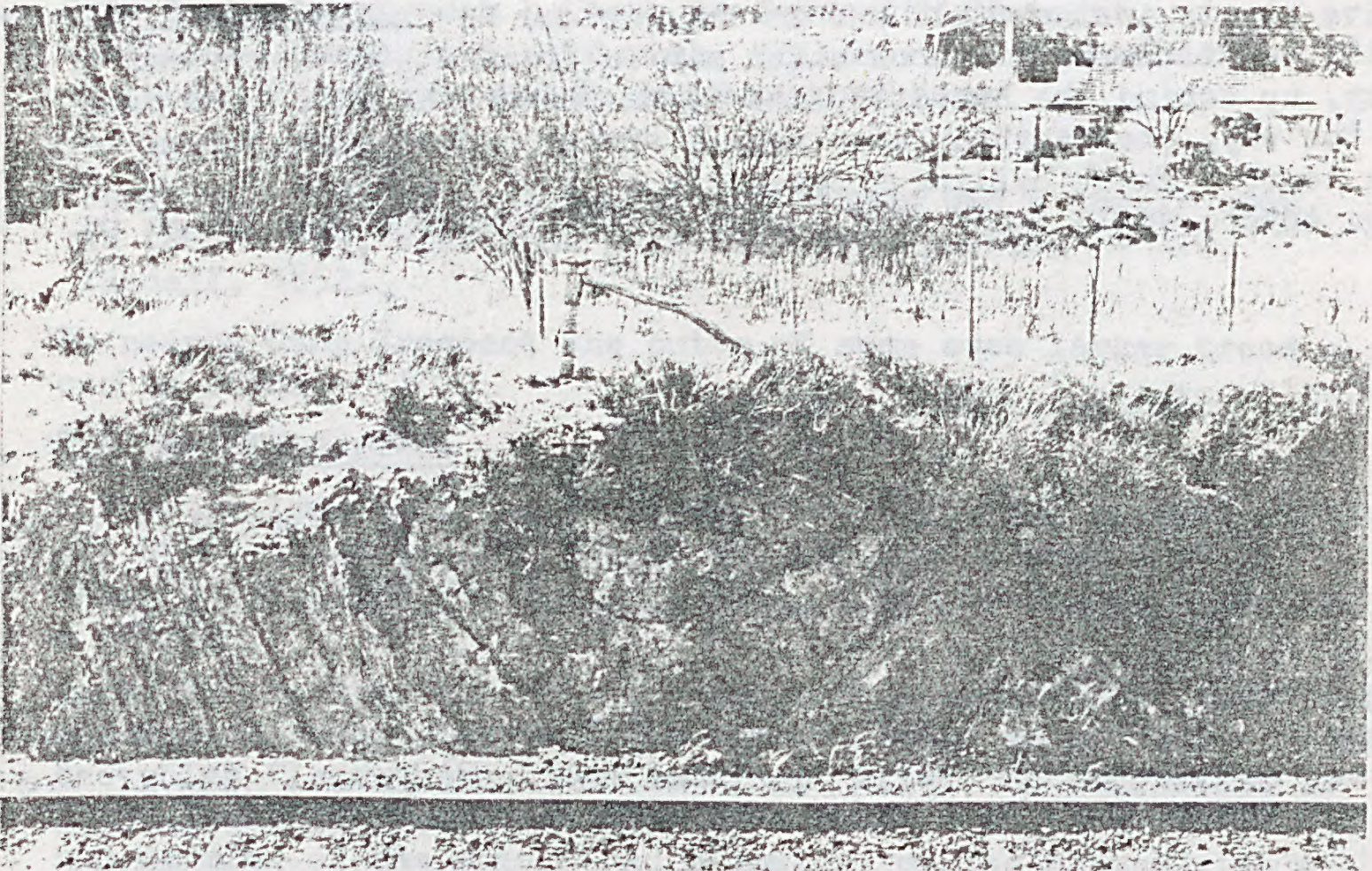
CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

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CASTLEMAINE FESTIVAL

2nd - 11th November, 1984



The Castlemaine Syncline

Not as well known to the general public as the famous Anticline in Lyttleton St. because of its more secluded location, (see city map). Both the Anticline and Syncline are pictured in a textbook familiar to many students, "Physiography of Victoria." by Prof. E.S.Hills.

Once again it is Festival time in Castlemaine. During the first week of November we especially welcome many visitors to our city. Most of them will have come to enjoy one or more of the many performances which will be taking place, or to view the various exhibitions of art and craft work which is on display.

Some will want to take the opportunity to enjoy the natural environment of this city which is rich in Natural History as well as History of the Gold rush period. We hope that this little publication will be of some use to such people, and we also extend to them a cordial invitation to join our excursion through the attractive Muckleford Forest on Saturday November 3rd, or to come and hear an outstanding speaker on the subject of native plants in the field and in the garden, Mr Fred Rogers. This will be at the High School which may be found at the North end of the city, up behind the hospital, and is on Friday the 9th, at 8 p.m.

By the way, does anybody else have a Bronze cuckoo which keeps very strange hours? Fancy calling incessantly at 2 or 3 O'clock in the morning. Anyone would think that a cuckoo didn't have a nest to go to.

Last Month at Campbells Creek

by Terry Collins

Back home after six weeks absence to find Wattle Birds have taken over and not a Honeyeater in sight. Checking my bird list which goes back five years, there is not one October without four kinds of Honeyeaters; so why this year?

Not even a Silvereye.

However Blue Wrens, Willie Wagtail and Yellow Thornbills who have produced another young one in the same nest. Would not know if they are the same parents or another lazy couple content with a second hand house. As usual at this time the Pallid Cuckoos and Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes have arrived back. Nice to hear their calls. One of our Jacky-jackys was out sunning himself but looking rather skinny. The area we keep as the natural paddock is ablaze with colour mainly Tetratheca and Rice Flowers. Missing are the Chocolate Lilies which were amass last year.

Pleases to find that one of the Orchids, Golden Moth was flowering this is one of three I hoped to save from grazing stock in a lane two years ago. The transplanting was a success and now it is in a safe place. Two Oscars for last month. (1) The Editor's write up of his visit to Wyperfeld and admittance of being lost. Brilliant. (How embarrassing. Ed.) (2) John Dare's, "Gardens of Tuscany" with such an entertaining commentary made a good night. More please John.

Places to see in Castlemaine

Areas of interest in the township

(See map on page 2)

1. Some large trees can be seen in Goldsmith Crescent. Sometimes, during the gold rush, prisoners were chained to these. Grey Box and Yellow box grow here

"Where the town of Castlemaine now stands was a lovely spot in those days, with some grand old gums growing" - A.C. Yandell, 1852.

In nearby Camp Crescent the butts of some even larger trees can be seen.

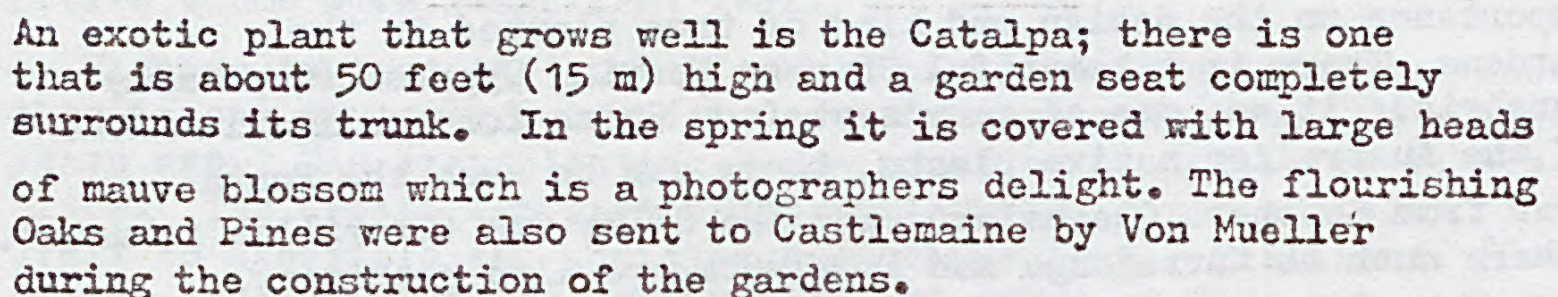
2. The Botanic Gardens

" The Castlemaine Botanic Gardens are well worth a visit. They are quite extensive and convey the feeling of tranquillity which often comes from quiet waters, green lawns and shade on a hot day.

Baron Von Mueller was the man who gave impetus to its construction and early development. It was developed on or near a creek bed which flows through Castlemaine. After the extraction of gold, levelling was quite a job for those days, and the bridge and damming of the waters and planning for the future with a proper drainage scheme must have been quite a feat.

Baron Von Mueller raised many seeds from all parts of the world at Melbourne, some of which were planted in these gardens. His recognition of the Australian Native Plant also placed importance on the design and kind of tree planted in the gardens. There is a beautiful Chinese Weeping Cypress (*Cupressus funebris*); it was one of many sent from China for acclimatisation. Of the Australian native plants, there can be seen the Bunya tree from Southern Queensland, and the Silky Oak (*Grevillea robusta*). Others such as Kurrajongs and Eucalypts are also prominent.

A horizontal scale bar with the word "SCALE" on the left and "FEET" on the right. The bar is marked with "0", "1000", and "2000".



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The lake holds water-fond of various kinds, bird life abounds and they have used Twisted Willow (*Salix tortuosa*) for holding the banks of the lake. Perhaps one of my favorites will always be the Silver Poplars, the leaves of which look like silver when rustled by a breeze. There is a very lovely specimen of the Ghost Maple (*Acer negundo argenticum*) under which we sat and contemplated the gardens construction "

(From the Northcote Garden Club newsletter, 1979. There are also some fine examples of the rough-barked apples, *Angophora intermedia*, growing in the gardens)

3. Kalimna Park See later
4. Kaweka Wildflower Reserve See later.
5. Glass House At the entrance to the caravan park.
6. Pennyweight Flat Cemetery This on the left of the road, about 5 metres distant, under a clump of Yellow Box. Many of the graves are raised because of the rocky ground.
7. Colles Road This road continues to the pine plantation and a round trip to Barkers Creek is possible.

Some fine Yellow-gum forest can be seen shortly after the cemetery. Note that the Coffee-bush (*Cassinia arcuata*) grows more rapidly than the pine.
8. Kalimna Point This is part of Kalimna Park. The car park in on the tourist road. There is a nature trail and leaflet. There is a mixture of local, exotic and other plants . A visit is recommended.
9. Anticline There is a fine example of an anticline in the cutting, just past the Hunter St turn-off on the Tourist Road.
10. Lyttleton St Anticline The rocks here are of Ordovician age, and were laid down about 500 000 000 years ago.
11. Burke and Wills Monument Robert O'Hara Burke was superintendent of Police in Castlemaine before leading the expedition to the north. A good view can be obtained from here.
12. Waste Area Some years ago this area was completely bare of vegetation after the effects of mining and erosion had caused the loss of all top soil. It is interesting to see how regeneration is taking place.
13. Wattle Flat Forest is an easily accessible patch of bush. It is sometimes also known as the Campbells Creek Forest.

At the pony club reserve look for the marker showing the site of the first cricket match.

Two round trips are suggested

- turn left off Dawes Road (near 13 on the map) and return via Richards Road
- continue along Dawes Road until the end of the forest. Then turn left, cross the railway and bear left. You should reach the highway.

14. Sawmill Road Bridge Look for the unconformity, where rocks of Tertiary age (3 million years old) join Ordovician rocks (500 million years).
15. View over Castlemaine District from the Kalimna Tourist Road.
16. Barkers Creek Note the Red Gums.
"The road to Castlemaine I thought the prettiest I have ever walked. The creek meandering along the roadside and the magnificent trees under the shade of which we rested reminded me greatly of places at home." R. Mitchell, 1853.
17. Odgers Road A fine example of an un-made road. What would this district be like if similar vegetation had been kept on all of the roads?
18. Sewerage Ponds Keep to the raised areas; some spots have crusts that are dangerous to walk on. Not for children, but good for bird.
19. Forest Creek (from Greenhill Av) Notice the artificial banks. This is not the original alignment; it is typical of how the creeks in the goldfields areas have been altered.
20. Syncline In the railway cutting a little west of the railway bridge. You can climb down from the bridge with care.

Report on a Trip to W.A.

by Terry Collins

Away late August through Sth Aust. to Ceduna with nothing of note except a few emus around Iron Knob, and different vegetation along the roadside. After Ceduna the hike across the Nullarbor. With its nothingness there is something about it as you speed along for the first time. Before Eucla we went down various tracks to view the cliffs and ocean; quite spectacular when rough, but scary with the wind in some places. Down one track we came upon a large bird cage $2\frac{1}{2}$ m square, with food and drink inside. It was a starling trap maintained by the W.A. authorities to save the state from invasion. However inside all there was, was about 60 swallows flying around

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in panic. Somehow they soon were back in the air.

Later on we were to hear on the radio and read about the sighting of a lone starling with a flock of Plover near Katanning. The furore was worse than if a foreign power had landed.

The first of the wildflowers came in sight just past Coolgardie. Like Victoria, without roadside verges lots of these plants would not survive. However wherever we went, every 10 Km brought a change of terrain and a different set of flowers. Most spectacular would be the Smoke Bush, Leschenaultias, Banksias, Kangaroo-Paws, Hoveas, (esp. *H. pungens*) Hakeas and Catpaws. But there are so many others just as magnificent in their own areas. The Sarsparillas were at their best down south completely covering small saplings up to 4-5 m high. Make certain, should you visit W.A. to be at Busselton around Sept. 20th. for their Annual Wildflower Show of 3 days. For over 60 years this show brings together all the various wildflowers from every district. They are displayed individually labelled and each district has its own display en masse.

Around Busselton through the scrub and grazing lands all you can see is White Arum Lilies. Even among the bracken fern they grow. Classed as a noxious weed and I am led to believe they are extremely hard to get rid of. Similarly in other places the White Iris is a curse. So in a suitable environment anything can become a weed.

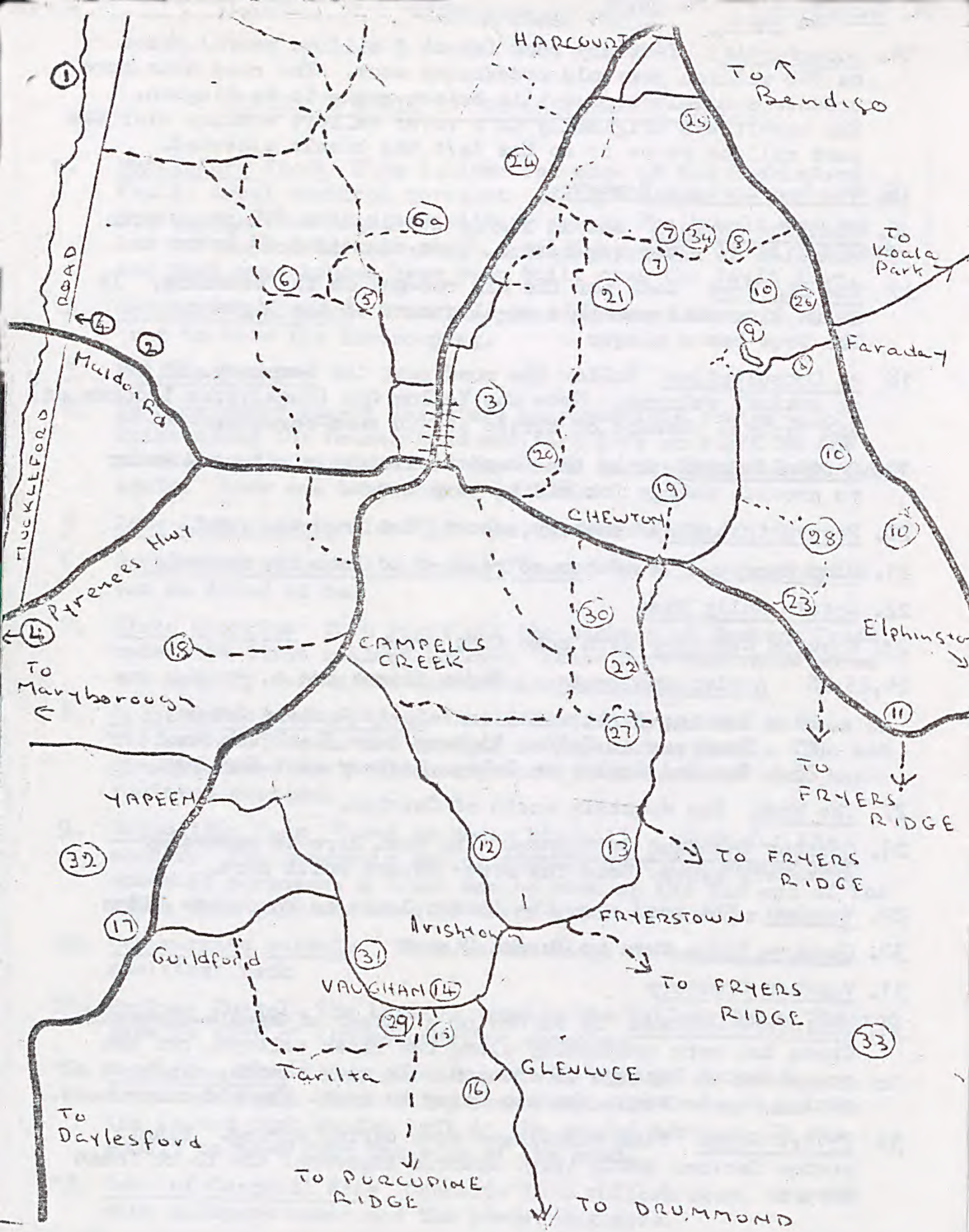
Sad to see the forests being attacked by Cinnamon Disease. Warning:- steer clear of roads where timber logs are being carted by Semitrailer train to the mills. Quite scary to have a Semi with a huge pile of logs x m. long with a similar trailer attached come thundering around a curve on a narrow road at a speed around minus or plus of 100 km/hr. But they are good drivers; while you grip your wheel with both hands they wave as they pass;- Birdlife seemed to be scarce but maybe they kept ahead of us in the forests. Wattle Birds everywhere, harassing everything in sight. Wildlife for the trip amounted to three kangaroos, six emus, and numerous lizards of which a few were quite large. All this in spite of all the road signs warning of Camels, Kangaroos and Wombats. Plenty of dead snakes on the road wound Penong on the way home. Perhaps all the windmills in the area mean water for them in Summer.

So for a feast of Wildflowers, scenery of various kinds, and places and Buildings of History, then West Australia can supply all.

PLACES TO VISIT IN THE CASTLEMAINE DISTRICT

1. Muckleford Creek This follows the edge of the Muckleford Fault; total vertical movement of 1200 metres in 500 million years, or 2.4 metres per million years. The basalt capping has moved 30 metres in about a million years. It is interesting that some houses have been built over the fault line.
2. Goldfields Nursery A native plant nursery; worth a visit just to view the landscaping.
3. Kalimna Reserve
4. To Muckleford Forest There are many possible routes e.g. drive along the Maldon Road and turn left or right at one of the turn offs. Most of the roads in the forest lead out again. Some was burned late in 1980.
5. Pony Club reserve Look for the Cricket Marker.
6. Wattle Flat (Campbells Creek) Forest *Grevillea dryophylla* can be found at 6a.
7. Slate Quarries Turn right off the highway at Barkers Creek, under the first railway bridge. These have been used as an art gallery during the Castlemaine Festival.
8. Granite/Sedimentary join Rocks of both types can be seen on the surface (or in the cutting at Expedition Pass). The hot granite baked the sedimentary rock; this hardened rock has resisted erosion.
9. Expedition Pass Named by Major Mitchell. Look for the marker. The reservoir was originally used for mining and domestic purposes. A flume can be seen at the far end of the wall; this pipe was used to carry water to a water race.
10. Metamorphic aureole This is the ridge or baked, erosion resistant rock
11. Railway Tunnel The highway crosses the railway here. The rock here is part of the metamorphic aureole.
12. Murdering Flat Some ruins here; the flat is at the bottom of Breakneck Hill. Travelling from Campbells Creek, look for the folded rock on the left in the eroded section. It can easily be seen from the edge of the road.
13. Duke of Cornwall Mine Opposite is a mullock heap, the old mine managers house and the powder magazine.

14. Unconformity Tertiary rock (about 3 million years) rests on 500 million year old Ordovician rock. The road near here crosses a basalt topped hill before going in to Vaughan. The basalt was originally in a river valley; erosion over the past million years or so has left the basalt elevated.
15. Vaughan Springs Reserve
16. Glenluce Springs Not as highly developed as Vaughan; with examples of river vegetation. River is the Loddon.
17. The Big Tree Look for the big red-gum in the township. It is in line with possible re-alignment of the highway. The tree has a plaque .
18. Mt Consultation Follow the road past the Cemetery. It is an extinct volcano. Note the Yellow Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon*) and typical absence of shrubs etc in such forests.
19. Garfield Wheel Only the foundations remain; it used water to provide energy for mining purposes.
20. Pennyweight Flat cemetery, about 50 m from the road.
21. Pine Forest A number of roads lead into the forest.
22. Wattle Gully Mine
23. Chewton Cemetery with some fine trees
- 24,25,26 Apples and pears Three places are
 - 24 - Norris; first stall on left in Barkers Creek
 - 25 - Deumers; on Calder Highway near Blackjack Road
 - 26 - Big Red Apple; on Calder Highway near Faraday.
27. The Monk The mountain south of Chewton.
28. Chewton Bushland Settlement The bush here is generally privately owned. Note the stone houses built here.
29. Vaughan The road over the Loddon leads to Porcupine Ridge
30. Chewton Bush Turn up Eureka Street
31. Vaughan Cemetery
32. Guildford Plateau It is one of a number of basalt plateaux. These too were originally along the river valleys, but are now elevated because of erosion. In many places, evidence of mining can be seen; the aim being to reach the old river beds.
33. Fryers Ridge Fine wildflower area during spring. Plants common further south (e.g. *Epacris impressa*) are to be found here



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The All-day Walk
Sat. Oct 6



"O.K. So you got us into here, now how do we get out?"



"So that's how those close-ups are taken."

CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. AGENDA

Saturday 3rd November Excursion to Muckleford. This is the F.N.C. contribution to the Festival Program, and our chance to show visitors our beautiful bushland. Meet at the Railway Station car park, Kennedy Street, at 1.30. This is our chance to show our visitors some of our bushland.

Friday 9th November. Monthly meeting. Speaker is Mr Fred Rogers, who will speak on "The Little Desert".

Thursday 22nd November. Business meeting. 7.30 p.m. at 38 Campbell St. All members are invited to any business meeting.

Friday 14 December. Members and Visitors night. This is the final meeting for 1984. Bring a plate if possible. And try to bring a specimen or some exhibit. Do you have some slides or photos to show?

Thursday 24 January. Business meeting at 7.30 p.m. Note that we do not have a general meeting in January.

Friday 8th February. Annual meeting. Program to be arranged

Saturday 9th February. Werona/Eganstown. Mainly birds. So bring your binoculars and birdbooks.

Saturday 9th March. Local Geology. An excursion around the district to see local rock formations. S.E.C. at 1.30. Leader is E. Perkins.

Sat/Sun 20-21 April. Western Victoria F.N.C. Association Campout at Princetown/Pt Campbell. Live-in. with evening excursion to Otway Glowworms.

August. Western Victoria F.N.C.A. campout at Bendigo. Date to be announced.

Fri/Sat/Sun 13-15 October. W.V.F.N.C.A. Campout at Coliac.

October. All day excursion to the Whipstick forest, Bendigo. Date to be announced

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Programs to be arranged for 1985 include Mr Phil Day (Ballarat C.A.E.) - Geology, and we hope, Rita telling us about Western Australia. Others are being arranged.

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Membership fees for 1984 are:-

- \$4 Single membership
- \$6 Family membership
- \$10 Supporting membership
- \$2 Pensioner/student

Subscriptions paid by new members during November/December will cover 1984/1985.